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Intelligence

UNITED STATES

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Office of the Secretary
Board on Geographical Names
Washington 25, D.C.

September 2, 1947

Central Intelligence Group
Washington 25, D. C.

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Attention: Mr. [REDACTED]
Room 2053 M Building

DOI Waiver Letter In ERU File

My dear Sir:

In reply to your request for information on the cost to complete name work on specific JANIS studies we submit the following information.

The attached table indicates the JANIS editing work underway at present, with estimates of money costs to completion and brief descriptions of the status of work. We will be glad to supply additional information where necessary.

This office has participated in the JANIS work since its inception, and it is believed that examination will show that the correlation of geographic names throughout the studies and the compilation of gazetteers for each area considerably increased the effectiveness of these studies. These facts may be corroborated by officers of the Joint Board.

The problem of names in these joint studies was critical because of the submission by a variety of intelligence agencies of material based upon a heterogeneous collection of source materials. The names produced by such materials varied greatly, and it was possible to efficiently correlate places and names only through a central office and authority.

The methods used in the editing process were as follows:

1. A base map was selected, the names for which were supplied by this office. This map was then used as a base for general reference by the various contributors. It did not, however, supply more than a small number of the names required since it was impossible to anticipate in advance which names would be used.

2. A carbon copy of the text for each chapter was supplied and the geographic names appearing therein were edited by this office. All maps, photograph captions and other materials containing geographic names were also edited. In certain cases it was found helpful to edit name lists such as lists of health or communication facilities in advance of submission of manuscript.

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It has been proven conclusively during the several years experience with the work that the only practicable and most satisfactory methods of name editing was by submission of the whole manuscript. Questions of application of name, the selection of name, and identification of names in many cases were apparent only from the context. The Board has taken some pride in the fact that many textual errors other than names were discovered in the process of editing.

3. A card file of geographic names with variants, locational information, etc. was gradually accumulated for each study and with the completion of the editing, formed the base material from which the gazetteer for each study was compiled.

Exact estimates of total costs of uncompleted portions of any one study are difficult in view of the variation of size of physical area covered by the individual studies; variation of source materials and ease of use (Chinese characters, etc.); nature or completeness of submitted materials, deadline considerations, etc. We feel, however, that the estimates given represent a reasonably exact cost of adequate research and handling.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Meredith F. Burrill

Meredith F. Burrill
Director

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